

In keeping with the state-of-the-discipline theme of the panel, this paper assesses the role of gender in current research on Roman religion. The role of gender in Roman religious practice has attracted much attention in recent years. Unfortunately, although many of the conclusions drawn from these studies should be forcing the reconsideration of common notions about Roman religion in general, this line of investigation has been not been well integrated into the wider field and has been allowed to run into something of an academic cul-de-sac. The prevalence of gender separatism in recent research is amply reflected in a selection of recent university-level sourcebooks on Roman religion, in which gender either plays a minor part or serves as the rubric under which the collection has been compiled. This paper suggests as a new direction for work on Roman religion a more thorough incorporation of gender issues into studies of a wider scope.

To illustrate the potential fruitfulness of the more comprehensive integration I propose, I offer a case study: a reconsideration of the Roman religious community, that is, the classes of individuals for whom Roman rituals were intended. It is sometimes argued that Roman civic religion was intended only for Roman citizens and was irrelevant to non-citizen residents of Rome, its colonies, and its provinces. Indeed, the inclusion of women in some public rituals has been used as part of an argument that women were citizens of Rome in their own right. Yet the inclusion in the public religious calendar of regular festivals and occasional *ad hoc* public observances requiring the participation of freedwomen and prostitutes, two non-citizen groups, suggests that the Rome's civic religious community was more widely defined and included groups other than male citizens and matrons.